

Subject: Street Talk: Challenge Grants "Are Go" Edition

From: LA Great Streets

Date: 02/03/2016 01:23 PM

To: Blair

Eric
Garcetti
#lamayor

GREAT^{LA}
STREETS

STREET TALK: CHALLENGE GRANTS EDITION

February 2016



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Councilmember Mike Bonin rides a pop-up protected bike lane at the Make It Mar Vista Challenge Grant event in November 2015.

Dear neighbor,

Welcome to the February 2016 edition of *Street Talk*, the Great Streets Initiative's monthly newsletter. This month, we're highlighting our upcoming Challenge Grant projects. In the months of February and March, seven community-led events across Los Angeles will temporarily transform our Great Streets into vibrant public spaces. We invite you to join us at all of them to help our community partners create a vision for each of their Great Street corridors.

You can find all the details about these events and more on our [events calendar](#). Click each image below for a link to the project website.

If you're reading this and need more *great* news in your life, check out our [blog](#), like us on [Facebook](#), follow us on [Twitter](#), or double-tap us on [Instagram](#) (if you're into that sort of thing).

See you on the street!

-The Great Streets team

[Re]visit [Re]seda

Reseda Boulevard in Northridge

February 6, 2016



[Click image for more details](#)

Street Beats

Crenshaw Boulevard in Hyde Park

February 20, 2016



[Click image for more details](#)

Connect the Dots

Van Nuys Boulevard in Van Nuys

February 20, 2016

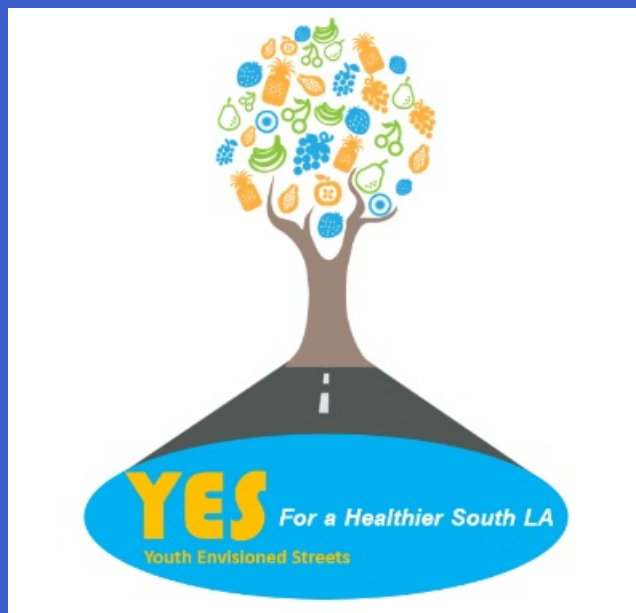


[Click image for more details](#)

Youth Envisioned Streets

Central Avenue in Historic South Central

February 27, 2016

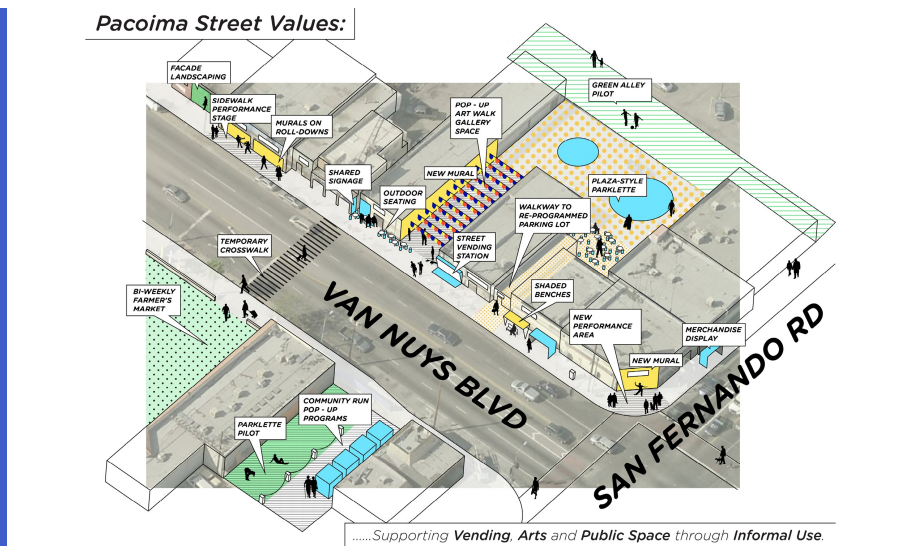


[Click image for more details](#)

Pacoima Street Values

Van Nuys Boulevard in Pacoima

March 6, 2016



[Click image for more details](#)

Nuestra Avenida

César Chávez Avenue in Boyle Heights

Saturday, March 12, 2016



[Click image for more details](#)

FIGJAM

North Figueroa in Highland Park

Saturday, March 19, 2016

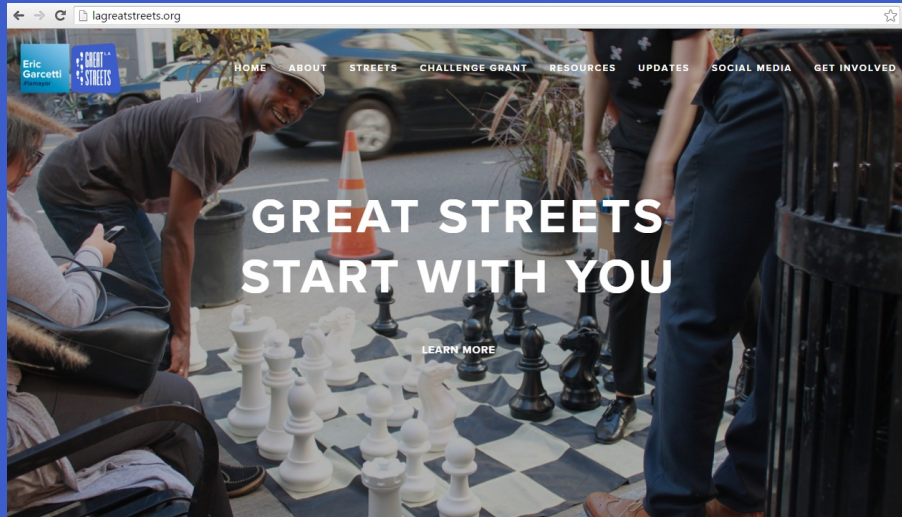


[Click image for more details](#)

New Website!

In case you missed it, we've rolled out a new website to help tell the story of Great Streets, keep you up-to-date on all our projects, and connect stakeholders with resources and tools.

Check it out at lamayor.org/greatstreets and let us know what you think!



Small Business Spotlight: Alta California Fonda, Pico Boulevard



Martha and Michael Esquivel, Mother and Son Chefs of Alta California Fonda

In Spanish “fonda” means “inn.” And while the warm, inviting Mexican restaurant on Pico in Mid-City is built to look like a welcome place to rest your head, it is the people and food inside that bring to life its name, Alta California Fonda.

The Esquivel family opened the restaurant in February 2014, with matriarch Martha running the kitchen, her husband Rey providing capital and food service expertise, daughter Nicole serving customers, and son Michael doing a little bit of everything.

“I grew up in the neighborhood,” Michael says, “and we saw that Pico has a lot of

potential and wanted to be a part of that. We wanted to give hard-working people from the community very delicious food that you can usually find in places like Beverly Hills or Santa Monica.”

While Michael mostly works as the restaurant’s general manager, he also serves tables and does a lot of cooking on the weekends, experimenting with new flavors and dishes. Martha is the real heart behind the menu, cooking everything from scratch, checking food quality and making all final culinary decisions. Owning and running such a tight-knit family business can be a challenge. “The most important thing is that we like what we do.” says Michael. “The restaurant has brought us closer because we like bringing really good food to people and making customers smile and want to come back. To my mother and me, food is art.”

While there may be art being served inside Alta California Fonda, outside on Pico Bl there are improvements that would be welcome by the Esquivel family, such as more street lighting and less vacant storefronts. Michael recently learned about the City’s new [Arts Activation Fund](#) and wants to partner with an artist to create a piece, perhaps on the exterior of his restaurant. He hopes it will help make Pico a more colorful street and bring more foot traffic and business. “It would let people know the street is changing.” he says.

And also invite more people into his family’s “fonda”.

[Alta California Fonda](#) | 5303 W. Pico Blvd



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Los Angeles Great Streets Initiative, Office of Mayor Eric Garcetti · 200 N Spring St. · Los Angeles, CA 90012 · USA

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